

GOD'S CONTROVERSY WITH NEW ENGLAND

Written in the Time of the Great Drought, Anno 1662

Are these the men that prized libertee
To walk with God according to their light,
To be as good as he would have them bee,
To serve and worship him with all their might,
Before the pleasures which a fruitfull field,
And country flowing-full of all good things, could yield, . . .

Are these the men whose gates with peace I crown'd,
To whom for bulwarks I salvation gave,
Whilst all things else with rattling tumults sound,
And mortall frayes send thousands to the grave?
Whilst their own brethren bloody hands embrewed
In brothers blood, and fields with carcasses bestrewed? . . .

If these be they, how is it that I find
In stead of holiness Carnality,
In stead of heavenly frames an Earthly mind,
For burning zeal luke-warm Indifferency,
For flaming love, key-cold Dead-heartedness,

For temperance (in meat, and drinke, and cloaths) excess?
Whence cometh it, that Pride, and Luxurie
Debate, Deceit, Contention, and Strife,
False-dealing, Covetousness, Hypocrisie
(With such like Crimes) amongst them arc so rife,
That one of them doth over-reach another?
And that an honest man can hardly trust his Brother?

How is it, that Security, and Sloth,
Amongst the best are Common to be found?
That grosser sins, in stead of Graces growth,
Amongst the many more and more abound?
I hate dissembling shews of Holiness.
Or practise as you talk, or never more profess. . . .

This O New-England hast thou got

By riot, & excess:
This hast thou brought upon thy self
By pride & wantonness.
Thus must thy worldyness be whipt.
They, that too much do crave,
Provoke the Lord to take away
Such blessings as they have.

We have been also threatened
With worser things then these:
And God can bring them on us still,
To morrow if he please.
For if his mercy be abus'd,
Which helpe us at our need
And mov'd his heart to pittie us,
We shall be plagu'd indeed.

Beware, O sinful Land, beware;
And do not think it strange
That sorer judgements are at hand,
Unless thou quickly change.
Or God, or thou, must quickly change;
Or else thou art undon:
Wrath cannot cease, if sin remain,
Where judgement is begun.

Ah dear New England! dearest land to me;
Which unto God hast hitherto been dear,
And mayst be still more clear than formerlie,
If to his voice thou wilt incline thine ear.

Consider wel & wisely what the rod,
Wherewith thou art from year to year chastized,
Instructeth thee. Repent, & turn to God,
Who wil not have his nurture be despized.

Thou still hast in thee many praying saints,
Of great account, and precious with the Lord,
Who dayly pour out unto him their plaints,
And strive to please him both in deed & word.

Cheer on, sweet souls, my heart is with you all,
And shall be with you, maugre Sathan's might:
And whereso'ere this body be a Thrall,
Still in New-England shall be my delight.